



countdown

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Discovery stacked in VAB and waiting to roll out to launch pad

GLAST rocket to undergo simulated flight test in May



◆ **Shuttle Update:** Space shuttle Discovery rolled to the VAB on Saturday. It was lifted into high bay 3 (at left) and mated with the external tank and solid rocket boosters.

Rollout to the pad is scheduled for May 3. The STS-124 crew will return to Kennedy May 6 for the Terminal Countdown Demonstration Test in preparation for launch. Discovery is targeted for launch on May 31.

◆ **ELV Update:** At Pad 17-B on CCAFS, the Delta II second stage for NASA's Gamma-ray Large Area Space Telescope, or GLAST, was hoisted into position on April 22. Upcoming milestones include a cryogenic test of the first stage using liquid oxygen, along with an associated countdown operation. A simu-

lated flight test follows, encompassing the flight events that occur from liftoff through spacecraft separation. Both tests will occur approximately the second week of May.

Meanwhile, at the Astrotech payload processing facility, end-to-end communications testing through the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System has been completed on GLAST. Three sunshades associated with the star tracker system were installed on Wednesday, and the sun trackers associated with the solar arrays were cleaned. The closeouts of the spacecraft thermal blankets continue. A final cleaning of the overall spacecraft and black light inspection was done on Friday, which are the last activities for spacecraft processing until fueling, which will be scheduled once a launch date has been determined.



■ **NASA Science** — Unlike Earth, the firmament of the moon is directly exposed to charged particles from the sun. What happens to moon dust under the on-

slaught of solar wind? Researchers in a NASA-supported lab are finding some surprising answers. You can read the full story at the Web site:

http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2008/10apr_moondustin-thewind.htm?list947891.

■ **Reminder** — The Kennedy Engineering Academy is hosting a Constellation Program Status technical talk presented by Jon Cowart from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. **today** in the KSC Training

Auditorium. NASA and contractor personnel are invited to attend this event.

■ **Going, Going, Gone** — The mobile service tower at Space Launch Complex 40 on CCAFS was imploded on Sunday. The facilities at the pad are being dismantled to make room for the construction of launch pad access and servicing facilities for the new Falcon rockets to be launched by Space Exploration Technologies, known as SpaceX.

Historically, the service tower was used for the final spacecraft launch preparations for NASA's Cassini spacecraft launched Oct. 15, 1997, which is currently orbiting Saturn.

■ **NASA News** — Astronauts who will fly on a space shuttle mission to service the Hubble Space Telescope for the final time will speak to middle school students across America simultaneously at 1:15 p.m. **Wednesday** from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. Topics of discussion will include details about the upcoming STS-125 mission to service Hubble. Astronauts also will discuss career diversity among the crew members who hold doctorate degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines. The schools are in New York, Texas, Washington, Pennsylvania and Michigan. An invited student audience at Goddard will also participate.

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Did You Know? You can go to the Web site <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/> for information on the crew's activities aboard the International Space Station, future launch dates and station sighting opportunities from anywhere on Earth. Details on station science operations can be found at <http://scipoc.msfc.nasa.gov/>, a site administered by the Payload Operations Center at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala.